

Memo

Meeting between Hon. William Casey and Hon. Gad Yaacobi

October 6, 1975

A meeting between Hon. William Casey, at that time Chairman and President of Exim Bank of the U.S., with Hon. Gad Yaacobi, at that time Minister of Transport of Israel, took place at the Exim Bank in Washington D.C. The meeting was held at the initiative of Dr. Philip Opher and he attended it. Also present was Mr. Eytan Raff, economic counsellor at the Embassy of Israel.

At the meeting a proposal by Dr. Opher was discussed, to reopen the Middle Eastern Railway which has been in operation before the World War II, expand and modernize it to link Africa, Asia and Europe by freight and passengers.

The project was viewed as an economic and political tool for advancing peace and economic development in the Middle East and between the Arab states and Israel.

Both Mr. Casey and Mr. Yaacobi found the project desirable. Mr. Yaacobi estimated that the first costs on stretches between Egypt and Israel as well as Israel and Lebanon will reach \$80-100 million. Mr. Casey said he will consider favorably a loan of \$1 million from Exim Bank for a feasibility study. He called the project idea brilliant.